VAUKEE JOURNAL

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Friday, November 17, 1967 | Daily, per copy, 10 cents By carrier, 45 cents weekly | Latest Edition † †

Gunman Slain, Officer Shot in Kenosha County Holdup

2 Men Rob Silver Lake State Bank

Silver Lake, Wis. – An unidentified gunman was shot to death Friday by a Kenosha county sheriff's deputy after the gunman and a companion held up the Silver Lake State bank.

The deputy, Gerald Van Patten, also was shot in the head in the exchange of gunfire outside the bank but authorities said he was not seriously wounded.

The companion, who escaped in a car, was cornered a short time later in a gravel pit near county trunks NN and K a few miles northwest of here.

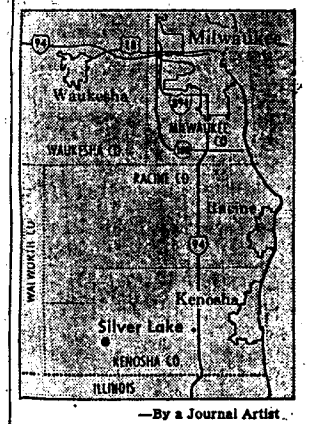
Both Men Armed

Officers said the men entered the bank shortly before 11 a.m. Silver Lake is a community of about 1,000 just north of the Illinois state line in western Kenosha county.

Both men wore dark clothing and Halloween masks, according to a bank official. They each carried .45 caliber automatic pistols, he said.

They ordered the six employes and several customers to lie on the floor at the rear of the bank, he said. The pair then scooped up an undetermined amount of cash from bank drawers and fled. The bank official, who declined to be identified, said neither man said anything during the robbery. He said they were in the building about two minutes.

While the men were in the bank, one of the tellers tripped an alarm which alerted police. Van Patten, who responded to the alarm, saw a car which matched the description of the robbers' vehicle on the outskirts of Silver Lake and gave chase.



—By a Journal Artist

Shot in Head

It was then that the pair exchanged gunfire and Van Patten was shot. He said they each carried two .45's and two Luger pistols. The robber was shot in the head.

Van Patten remained on the scene, officers said, and was assisting with the search for the second robber. The gunman's bullet had just grazed his head.

Deputies from Racine, Kenosha and city police from Kenosha and Burlington and a private plane were ordered into service, authorities said.

The area being searched, Bloss' gravel pit, is large and hilly, officers said. They said he fled on foot into the gravel pit.

They were uncertain whether the man had money with him from the bank robbery, they said.